

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Appreciation is expressed to Examiner Czewczyk and Examiner Lopez for their time and attention during the interview conducted at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on April 19, 2010. The remarks below discuss the substance of the interview.

Claims 1-12, 19 and 20 remain readable on the elected invention. Of those claims, Claim 1 is the only independent claim.

Claim 20 is amended to address the issue raised at the top of page two of the Official Action. Accordingly, withdrawal of the claim rejection based on the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 is respectfully requested.

The discussion during the interview focused primarily on the two anticipatory rejections of independent Claim 1. One of those rejections is based on the disclosure in U.S. Patent No. 5,507,852 to Frank et al. As discussed during the interview, this reference discloses a quench arrangement that includes a plurality of longitudinally extending nozzle assemblies 52 that are spaced apart from one another. As shown in Fig. 2, each of the nozzle assemblies 52 includes an air supply conduit 55 connected to chambers 48, 50 positioned at the opposite ends of the nozzle assemblies 52. The chambers 48, 50 are connected to respective air supply ducts 54, 56 that supply air to the chambers. Each of the nozzle assemblies 52 also includes a nozzle plate 57 provided with holes. The holes extend from the surface 58 of the nozzle plate 57 and communicate with the conduit 55.

As discussed during the interview, the tempering apparatus recited in Claim 1 includes, in combination with the other features, a pair of blastheads each comprised of a plurality of spaced elongate plenums that supply quench gas to an array of quench nozzles. The quench gas supplied by the plenums issue from the quench nozzles as jets of quench gas. Claim 1 recites that the length of the quench nozzles exceeds their diameter.

The Official Action takes the position that the nozzles in the nozzle bars 57 in Frank et al. inherently have a length exceeding their diameter because Frank et al. "discloses that the nozzle bar has nozzle holes that extend from the surface (58) through the plenum (55) to communicate with the air openings (51) (col. 3, lines 51-56)." However, as explained during the interview, Frank et al. does not state that the nozzle holes in the nozzle plate 57 extend from the surface 58 through the plenum 55. Rather, the sentence in lines 51-55 of column 3 states that the holes in the nozzle bar 57 extend from the surface 58 of the nozzle bar to the conduit 55. Thus, as explained during the interview, Frank et al. discloses nothing more than a nozzle bar with through holes. The through holes extend from the surface 58 of the nozzle bar 57 and communicate with the conduit 55. There is no indication that the holes in the nozzle plate possess a length greater than their diameter. Lines 56-58 of column 3 of Frank et al. mention that the nozzle bars 57 can be replaced with a plurality of individual nozzles extending from the conduit 55 to direct air at the glass. Once again though, this disclosure of nozzles does not necessarily and inherently mean that the nozzles possess a greater length and diameter.

Thus, the anticipatory rejection based on the disclosure in Frank et al. is not appropriate and should be withdrawn. The Examiners agreed with this observation and indicated that the anticipatory rejection would be withdrawn.

The other anticipatory rejection involves the disclosure U.S. Patent No. 4,711,655 to Schultz. As discussed during the interview, this rejection is based on the position that the nozzles in row A of Schultz constitute one row of quenched nozzles, the nozzles in row B constitute another row of quench nozzles, the nozzles in row C constitute a further row of quench nozzles, etc. As pointed out during the interview, if the nozzles in row A constitute one row of quench nozzles, that row of nozzles constitutes a plenum. Similarly, the row B of nozzles forms another plenum and the row C of nozzles forms a further plenum. Each of these plenums extends parallel to the direction of conveyance of the bent glass sheet. This is in direct contrast to the language in Claim 1 reciting that the plenums extend transversely to the direction of conveyance of the bent glass sheet.

The Examiners understood this argument but indicated that the language in Claim 1 referring to the transverse arrangement of the plenums may not be sufficiently specific to make clear that each of the plenums extends transversely to the direction of conveyance of the bent glass sheet. That is, the Examiners indicated that the language could be interpreted to mean that the collective arrangement of the plenums extends transversely to the conveyance direction.

To respond to this point, Claim 1 is amended to recite that each of the plenums extends transversely to the direction of conveyance of the bent glass sheet. It is respectfully submitted that this alternative wording for what was originally intended distinguishes over the disclosure in Schultz.

Another point of distinction between Claim 1 and the Schultz disclosure involves the language in Claim 1 reciting that the quench nozzles of each plenum are mutually inclined to provide diverging jets of quench gas. In other words, as explained during the interview, the wording in Claim 1 recites that the quench nozzles are mutually inclined, not that the plenum is mutually inclined. Quite clearly, Schultz does not disclose that at least some of the nozzles in each respective row/plenum A, B, C, D are mutually inclined to provide diverging jets of quench gas as recited in Claim 1.

At the conclusion of the interview, the Examiners indicated that in view of the need to withdraw the anticipatory rejection based on the disclosure in Frank et al., this Amendment would be entered.

Early and favorable action concerning this application is respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: April 23, 2010

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